

Appl. No. 10/616,294

Amdt. dated December 22, 2005

Reply to Office action of September 22, 2005

Remarks/Arguments

1. Introduction

Applicants note with appreciation the finding of allowable subject matter recited in claims 1-17 and 20-23. To expedite prosecution of the present patent application, Applicants have amended claim 18 to include the subject matter of claim 20 that was considered allowable. As a result, Applicants respectfully contend that claim 18, as amended, defines an invention suitable for patent protection.

2. Claim Objections

In the Office action, claim 3 was objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as allegedly being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. To that end, claim 3 has been amended to ensure that the same comports with the requirements set forth in 37 CFR 1.75(c). Amendments made to overcome these objection were not necessitated by any prior art. No new subject matter has been introduced by these amendments.

3. Drawings

In the Office action the drawings were objected to as allegedly being of insufficient quality to permit examination. To that end, please find enclosed replacement drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.81. Further, please note that in the Office action, it was stated that the Applicant was given a Two Month time period [hereinafter TIME PERIOD] to submit new drawings. However, it is believed that the TIME PERIOD is erroneous. It is respectfully contended that Applicants have 3 months from the mailing date of the Office action in which to submit new drawings. As a result, it is believed that Applicants should not be charged with fees

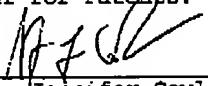
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associated with a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a). However, should the Director believe that said fees are applicable, the Director is hereby authorized to charge deposit account 502650.

Applicants respectfully request examination in view of the remarks. A notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION/MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO or deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents.

Signed: 
Typed Name: Jennifer Cowlishaw

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Respectfully Submitted,



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